RIAP BULLETIN

Volume 9, Number 1–2 **January–June 2003**

Research Institute on Anomalous Phenomena (RIAP) is an independent scientific research body, established in 1992 by the Kharkov-based aerospace company Vertical and aimed at scientific studies in the fields of non-traditional energy sources, the problem of anomalous atmospheric phenomena and the SETI (Search for Extraterrestrial Intelligence) question.

We study:
anomalous phenomena.
We consider:
any theories.
We accept:
normal proofs,
exact references.

CONTENTS

Published Quarterly by Research Institute on Anomalous Phenomena (RIAP)
P.O.Box 4542, 61022 Kharkov-22, UKRAINE
Website: http://www.geocities.com/riap777/
E-mail address: tolimak@iatp.org.ua

THE ANCIENT OF DAYS: DEITY OR MANNA-MACHINE?

George Sassoon *

Following my mother's death in 1975, I was exploring her library and found a strange book entitled *The Kabbalah Unveiled*, by S. L. Macgregor Mathers. First published in London in 1887, the work was still in print, so clearly enjoyed a steady sale. It purports to be a translation of certain parts of the *Zohar*, an ancient Jewish mystical work, and consists largely of physical descriptions of an entity known as the Ancient of Days.

I had come across this title in the well known English hymn 'Immortal, invisible', and as a brief mention in the Biblical book of Daniel, and had vaguely assumed it to be simply another title of God. But in Mathers' book, there was a depiction of something clearly very different from our present concepts of the Almighty. The book was in the form of a series of lectures given by a certain Rabbi Simon bar Yochai to a group of his disciples, in which he claimed to be passing on a body of ancient secret knowledge which had hitherto only been transmitted orally. This was said to be the Secret or Unwritten Law, as opposed to the written Law laid down in the books of Moses.

The material was split into three sections, known as the Book of Concealed Mystery (BoM), the Greater Holy Assembly (GHA), and the Lesser Holy Assembly (LHA). These were split into Bible-style numbered verses for ease of reference.

What was this secret knowledge? I found passages such as:

(GHA 37) Like as if it were said "He is found (that is, He may in some way to a certain extent be known), and he is not found;" for He cannot he clearly comprehended; but He hath as it were been formed; neither yet is He to be known of any, since He is the Ancient of the Ancient Ones.

(38) But in his conformation is He known; as also he is the Eternal of the Eternal Ones, the Ancient of the Ancient Ones, the Concealed of the Concealed Ones; and in His symbols is he knowable and unknowable.

(39) White are His garments, and His appearance is the likeness of a Face vast and terrible.

(40) Upon the throne of flaming light is He seated, so that He may direct its (flashes).

(41) Into forty thousand superior worlds the brightness of the skull of His head is extended, and from the light of this brightness the just shall receive four hundred worlds in the world to come.

(42) This is that which is written, Gen. xxiii, 16: "Four hundred shekels of silver, current money with the merchant."

(43) Within His skull exist daily thirteen thousand myriads of worlds, which draw their existence from Him, and by Him are upheld.

I wondered what had led my mother to acquire this book, then remembered that when younger she had briefly been interested in the occult. The work, it seemed, was used widely by mystics, devotees of eccentric religions and such-like, and it must have been these people who had kept it in print for nearly a century. It was extraordinary that I, a hard-nosed engineer, should have stumbled across it.

At first I was inclined to dismiss the book as fanciful nonsense, but certain aspects of it puzzled me. Why was this ancient 'secret knowledge' considered to be so important? It was clearly a detailed description of some physical object - an idol, perhaps - but what then of the Jewish abhorrence of idolatry? Above all, what was this material doing in a supposedly religious work?

These questions nagged, and having nothing better to do at the time, I looked up the original sources. First, Knorr von Rosenroth's *Kabbala Denudata* (Frankfurt, 1677) which gave parallel Latin and Aramaic texts, and then the original Aramaic in an edition printed in Lublin, Poland, 1882. Being something of a linguist, I decided to tackle the Aramaic. It is not a very complicated language, once the script has been mastered, and I was aided by the fact that it was obviously not the author's native tongue. According to Gershom Scholem, the world's leading expert on the Kabbalah, the *Zohar* had originally been written down by Moses of Leon, a Spanish Jew, in about 1290. It has been circulating among the Jewish community ever since then in manuscript and in printed forms. Aramaic was the language of Babylon, akin to Hebrew, and it became the everyday language of the Jews after their captivity in that city, Hebrew being reserved for religious purposes as Latin was in the Catholic Church till

* George Sassoon (born London, 1936, son of the poet Siegfried) was educated at Oundle School and Cambridge University (MA Natural Sciences), thereafter working in the electronics industry principally on specialised scientific instrument design. Now semi--retired, he lives in Wiltshire, England, and Scotland. He is glad to receive comments on the Ancient of Days and related matters to email address geosas@aol.com .

recently. Aramaic was Jesus Christ's native tongue.

In spite of any linguistic difficulties, I found the Aramaic far clearer than the Latin and English translations, and stripped of Mathers' and von Rosenroth's flowery language it became a very lucid description of a physical object. The Ancient of Days consisted principally of three 'skulls', an outer one which contained two others inside it, placed one above the other. In the middle of this arrangement was the 'cardinal lamp', which shone with 'a brightness to exceed all brightnesses'. It has a 'beard', the 'hairs' of which grow out of one part of its 'face' and back in again at other places; there is no mention of a body, but there is a 'strong right arm', there are six feet, and in between them there are two testicles, and a penis. A substance known variously as the 'dew', the 'oil of great goodness' and other terms, ran down from the upper parts of this object, to be stored in the 'testicles' and finally discharged from the 'penis'.

What, we may ask, is the purpose of all this? The answer comes towards the end of the Lesser Holy Assembly (my translation):

(LHA 436) Into the skull of the Small-faced One there drips the dew from the white head, and it is contained in it.

(437) And this dew is seen in two colours; and by it is fed the field of the holy apples. And from this dew they grind the manna of the just ones for the world to come. And by it the dead are raised to life. And the manna did not appear to be derived from this dew except at one time; the time when Israel was wandering in the desert. And (then) the Ancient one of All fed them from this place. But afterwards, it was not found. As it is said (Exod. 16:4) 'Behold I will rain bread from heaven for you." And also (Gen. 27:28) 'Therefore God give thee of the dew of heaven, etc.'

At last, we have some possible indication of the function of this Ancient of Days. It did not speak, or move of its own accord; it was carried around in the desert and placed on various 'thrones', which had to be 'cast down' when the next move was made. But now we learn that its function was to produce manna. Could it have been some type of machine?

According to the Bible, the manna that fed the Israelites fell from the sky and was collected by the people themselves. At once, I thought of various practical difficulties here: surely the manna would have become mixed with sand, dirt, or gravel; and how could the ration of one omer per family have been enforced? There is no satisfactory modern explanation of the so-called 'miracle' of the manna; insect secretions have been suggested, but surely the Israelites would have been aware of this given the numbers of insects required, and we would have read today that God sent the insects, not that the manna came 'from heaven'. Could its source have been a technological miracle, a machine?

One fact supporting the machine theory is that the *Zohar* texts include many measurements among the descriptions of the physical parts. The length of the 'penis', for example, is given as 248 'worlds'. This will be explained in detail later.

Lacking words for machine parts, the compilers of the *Zohar* used parts of the human body - 'skulls', 'eyes' and many other terms. It is interesting to note that the Apache tribe used the same technique when coining words for parts of motor vehicles in their own language.

For example:

Apache word	Human anatomical meaning	Automobile part meaning
daw	chin and jaw	front bumper
wos	shoulder	front fender
gun	hand and arm	front wheel
kai	thigh and buttocks	rear fender
ze	mouth	gas-pipe opening
ke	foot	rear wheel
chun	back	chassis
inda	eye	headlight
chee	nose	hood
ta	forehead	auto top
tsaws	vein	electrical wiring
zik	liver	battery
pit	stomach	gas tank
chih	intestine	radiator hose
jih	heart	distributor
jisoleh	lung	radiator

These examples are taken from Peter Farb's book *Word Play* (London 1974).

The next question was: could it be possible to build such a machine to produce a basic foodstuff, given our present technical knowledge or some reasonable extrapolation of it? At this point, I had involved my friends Rodney Dale and Martin Riches in the project, and it was Rodney who suggested that a manna-like substance might be synthesised by the intensive cultivation of some microscopic water plant such as *Chlorella,* a type of pond-weed which reproduces extremely rapidly in the correct conditions.

For *Chlorella*-type organisms to grow, the principal requirements are: water, carbon dioxide, nitrogen, and light. As regards the water, the upper part of the Ancient of Days comprises a dew-still, a cooled surface which could extract water even from the dry air of the Sinai desert; carbon dioxide and nitrogen are available in the atmosphere, and could be made available to the culture by circulating it through the 'beard-hairs' in contact with the air via a semi-permeable

membrane; and as for the light, the *Zohar* makes endless mention of the 'cardinal lamp' in the interior of the Ancient One. The other requirement, of course, is energy. Based on an Israelite population of 600 families rather than 600 thousands - the Hebrew word ALP can mean either - they would need 4.4 x 10^6 kilocalories per day = 210 kW or 70 watts per person. The machine being highly developed technology, its energy efficiency should be good. we came up with a figure around 500 kilowatts, which is within the capacity of a small nuclear reactor. Such a reactor can probably convert nuclear energy directly into light energy, using a neutron-pumped laser. Heat will also be produced, so thermoelectric methods can be used to produce electricity for control and other purposes.

Turning the alga sludge into edible manna must have involved a cooking process, with surplus heat being used for this and to incinerate waste products. This was discharged from the 'nose' of the Ancient of Days, an exhaust pipe, causing the column of fire and smoke seen over the Tabernacle when the machine was in production.

So - the thing is feasible, and we understand that such alga-growing devices are used in nuclear submarines for air purification, and there have been several experiments using similar systems intended to investigate the feasibility of closed ecological systems for spacecraft.

In 1974, Sergei Vlasov wrote of the Soviet Bios-3 experiment in the Russian journal *Tekhnika-Molodezhi*. This was a closed-cycle environment in which three men lived for six months. Their bodily waste was used to fertilise the *Chlorella* cultivator which purified the air, and there were hydroponic cultivators producing wheat and vegetables. More details of this are given in our book *The Manna Machine*.

The next question is: supposing there was such a device, what became of it? According to the *Zohar*, it was used during the desert wanderings to feed the people, but ceased to function on their entry into the Promised Land. Thereafter, it became a ritual object, cared for by a few priests. The Bible refers to the Ark of the Covenant, but it was probably not the Ark which was taken to the battle with the Philistines (1 Sam. 4) but this machine. The enemy captured it, and were stricken with 'emerods' - possibly sores caused by exposure to radioactivity. Such was their terror of the object, that they returned it to the Israelites, the only people who knew how to handle it safely. It was placed on a cart drawn by two cows who also were terrified of it, so they fled, pulling it behind them across the border to Bethshemesh, where a considerable number of people were 'smitten' for the mere offence of looking at it (1 Sam. 6).

In these Bible passages, the object referred to is the 'Ark of the Covenant', but our view is that it was the manna machine which caused such havoc. After the machine was lost, the wooden box known as the Ark was constructed to house the few remaining relics from ancient times. Later, the legends surrounding the machine were transferred to the Ark, and the machine's supernatural powers were attributed to it.

After it ceased functioning, after the entry into the Promised Land, the machine became a ritual object cared for by a dedicated band of priests. They spent their time measuring it, and numerous dimensions are given in the *Zohar*. For example (GHA 968): "The length of that penis is two hundred and forty eight worlds. And all of them hang in the mouth of the penis which is called 'Yod'."

The 'world' unit is used as a measure of length, area, and volume. We speculated that the unit was in fact a mustard seed, and measured a sample of seeds to get a mean diameter of 2.05 millimetres. Length can be measured as a single row of seeds, area as a single layer of them, and volume by filling it with seeds. Strangely enough, using these dimensions gave sizes for the various parts in the right ballpark to support our rough estimates derived from engineering calculations. Taking the 'world' unit to be a mustard seed gives us these dimensions:

Length of nose of Small-faced One:	77 cm.
Length of penis (manna discharge nozzle):	50.9 cm.
Area of face of Ancient One:	13.5 sq. m.
Area of face of Small-faced One:	5.47 sq. m.
Volume of skull of Ancient One:	0.84 cu. m.
Volume of skull of Small-faced One:	0.58 cu. m.

The Ancient One and the Small-faced One are the two main parts of the machine, which had to be separated every week on the Sabbath for cleaning, a double manna ration having been issued the day before. On the Sabbath night it was reassembled, and started up with much nail-biting. Once the smoke and fire appeared from the 'nose', they knew that the operation had been successful and there was general rejoicing. The plugging together of the two parts was seen as a sexual union of male and female parts, leading to the fertility of the people of Israel. Priests were expected to be married, and to emulate the machine by having sex on the Sabbath night.

According to the Bible, Solomon built his Temple to house the Ark, but in all probability it was the Ancient of Days that occupied pride of place in the Holy of Holies. It was brought into Jerusalem from its obscure previous home with great rejoicing. At the conquest by the Babylonians, the Ark and the machine appear to have been lost, perhaps hidden in a cave across

the Jordan, or even in one of the caverns under the Temple Mount in Jerusalem. It is significant that Israel's holiest place today is the Western (or Wailing) Wall - could the venerable relic still be buried behind the ancient masonry?

Coming closer to modem times, it has been suggested that the Knights Templars may have recovered the Ancient of Days - or some part of it - and brought it to Europe. Possibly even, this recovery operation was the hidden impetus behind the Crusades. The first Templar knights spent years excavating beneath the Temple mount; it was only later that they adopted the task of protecting pilgrims. The *Zohar* legends of the Ancient of Days have much in common with the later Christian notion of the Holy Grail, a miraculous object which dispensed heavenly food. But all these speculations must remain unproven until the machine, or some identifiable part of it, is located.

For more details of the possible later history of the machine, readers are referred to the books of Johannes and Peter Fiebag, whose painstaking research has unearthed a vast body of evidence showing that the Templars had repeated our discovery 1000 years earlier, that they knew that this miraculous object had existed, and that they may have found some traces of it.

The biggest question of all, however, is: supposing that there was a manna-machine, where did it come from in the first place? According to the *Zohar*, it was given by 'the Lord' to Aaron and his tribe of priests, who also received the 'secret knowledge' of how to operate it. Who, then, was 'the Lord'? He was certainly not the omniscient, omnipotent God of our religions today, but a figure in many ways human, but with some superhuman powers. Was 'the Lord' a space visitor? This is the explanation which best fits the facts, but we shall never know for sure unless some artefact of demonstrably extraterrestrial origin can be found.

Certainly, the Biblical account of the Lord landing on the mountain in Sinai could well be a description of a spacecraft landing, with the thunder, fire and smoke. Throughout the Old Testament, wherever the 'glory' of the Lord is mentioned, it clearly refers to some type of vehicle. The Hebrew word used (*kavod*) also means 'chariot'. The Lord is always going hither and thither 'in his glory'.

Once the smoke had cleared and the rocks cooled, Moses went up to receive the tablets with the commandments from the Lord, then Aaron and his priests ascended to receive the 'secret knowledge' - training in operating the machine. After this, there was the episode of the golden calf, which appears to have been an outbreak of manna-machine worship. It was after this that strict security was imposed, the machine being housed in the 'Tabernacle' - an open-roofed tent - which was out of bounds to all but the priests. All that the ordinary people could see was the column of fire and smoke from within it, the exhaust from the machine's 'nose'. This is mentioned in Psalm 18:8: 'There went up a smoke out of his nostrils ...'

Machines such as the Ancient of Days may well have been carried aboard 'The Lord's' spacecraft to feed the crew. In fact according to the Talmud, another collection of traditional Jewish lore, manna was the food of 'angels', and was totally absorbed by the body; those who lived on it had no need to relieve themselves. It is hard to believe that such a detail could be invented unless there was some basis of truth behind it.

There are many more items of evidence to support our manna-machine hypothesis, and even twenty years after the original research we still stumble over more. There is insufficient space to give them all here, so we can only refer readers to our original publications, *The Manna Machine* and *The Kabbalah Decoded*, and also the excellent work of the Fiebag brothers which I have just finished translating into English. It is not yet published but available as an MS Word document.

We also recommend that readers turn to their Bibles, and re-read the Old Testament in the light of what they have learned from this article. In the *Zohar*, manna is also referred to as 'mercy' or 'loving-kindness'. In many Bible references, it is clear that 'mercy' is not the forgiveness of God for past sins, but some physical substance. The Hebrew word (*chesed*) actually means 'charity', something given free gratis. Evidently the people were astonished that they didn't have to pay for their manna. 'Small mercies' were second-grade manna, and given to the 'mixed multitude' of Egyptians who tagged along with the Israelites in the desert.

Bibliography

Mathers, Samuel Liddell MacGregor, *The Kabbalah Unveiled*, London 1887, 12th impr. 1971.

Knorr von Rosenroth, Christian, *Kabbala Denudata*, Sulzbach, Frankfurt, 1677-1684.

[Moses of Leon,] *Sepher-ha-Zohar*, Lublin 1882.

Scholem, Gershom Gerhard, *Major Trends in Jewish Mysticism* (3rd Edn.), London 1955.

Sassoon, George, Dale, Rodney, *The Manna-Machine*, Sidgwick and Jackson, London 1978. Available from University Microfilms, Ann Arbor MI Ref. No. AU00392.

Sassoon, George, *The Kabbalah Decoded*, (Edited by R. Dale), Duckworth, London 1978. Available from University Microfilms, Ref. No. AU00393.

Fiebag, Johannes & Peter, *Die Entdeckung des Grals*, Goldmann, Muenchen 1989.

SPACE OBJECTS OVER THE UKRAINE?

(Reprinted from: *Znannia ta Pratsia*, Kiev, 1967, No. 1, pp. 18–19)

From RB Editor: Late in 1965 I came for the first time from Kharkov to Moscow, where I had the pleasure to become acquainted with the first Soviet ufologists - Yuriy Fomin and Yuriy Roscius (the latter was an anomalist of broader interests rather than just a ufologist; nevertheless, subsequently he published a really fine - and professionally written - work on the Robozero UFO sighting of 1663). I also had an opportunity to read foreign ufological books that were kept in the Lenin Library and the State Library of Foreign Literature (they could be obtained in these libraries without any problem). True, the libraries had no ufological journals - but Yuriy Fomin had already established contacts with the *Flying Saucer Review* team and the French journal *Phénomenes Spatiaux*.

Thus, it would be unfair to say that we lacked any information about world ufology at that time; this was not the case. But what seemed strange to me was the fact that the Soviet press was utterly silent about the UFO phenomenon (even though the question of ancient space visits to the Earth was actively discussed on the pages of popular-science journals from 1960 onwards). And if it was mentioned, then only with derision. Nevertheless, it seems there was at that time no direct governmental prohibition of this subject matter; merely that Soviet editors were acting with great caution. The fact however remained: it would be possible to obtain first-hand UFO reports from Soviet people only via the press, but the latter refrained from propagandizing this material.

The situation should have been corrected in some way. Having returned to Kharkov, I wrote a not very long article about the UFO phenomenon, supplemented it with a reporting form for UFO witnesses, and sent it to the popular-science journal *Znannia ta Pratsia* (ZtP) that was published in Kiev in the Ukrainian language, with a circulation of about 40,000. And the article was published in *ZtP*, 1966, No. 9.

It so happened that it was the first article in the Soviet press that regarded the UFO phenomenon as real and worthy of serious investigation. I would not overestimate the role of this article in the development of Soviet ufology: in fact, being published in the provinces and in the Ukrainian language, it did not have too much influence on the UFO controversy in the USSR. But although the reporting form was excluded from the article by *ZtP* editors, there remained the appeal to the readers to report their UFO observations. To my mind, this was the article's main achievement.

Some of the readers' letters that were sent to the journal were published in its number 1 issue, 1967. In fact, there was nothing over-sensational in these letters - but this was the first - and the last for the subsequent 20 years - set of Soviet UFO reports published in the USSR. Even when in the year 1967 the Soviet press began to discuss the UFO problem openly, actively and bravely - and this brave discussion lasted almost a year - virtually all concrete examples of UFO observations reached the printed page only from foreign sources.

Up to the late 1980s all collections of Soviet UFO reports prepared and used by ufologists in this country remained purely Samizdat ones. That is why reprinting of this publication seems to me a worthwhile affair - the more so that some of the strange objects described in it appear to have been "UFOs in the strict sense of the word." ...As for other ones - these were probably something less exotic, including, in particular, rocket tests.

Anyway, the eyewitnesses who sent their reports to the journal were sincerely trying to help scientists in gathering the necessary material. It is not their fault that official science left the questions asked by these people unanswered. Even today I still feel deep gratitude to these people for their intellectual curiosity and civic courage. The editors of *ZtP* should also be praised: they too contributed to the origination of Soviet ufology!

* * *

[From ZtP Editor:] The paper "Guests from Space or Atmospheric Phenomena?" authored by V. Rubtsov and published in *Znannia ta Pratsia*, 1966, No. 9, has attracted great interest among our readers. As we expected, unusual sky phenomena have been observed over the Ukraine as well, not only in America, Japan, and England.

These are described in the set of readers' letters presented below.

Thus, the eyewitnesses testify:

*

In July of 1953, there flew over a small village of Boroven'ki (Lugans'k Region), a silent fiery ball leaving no trail, its speed being about 300 kilometers per hour. Diameter of the ball was, as

far as I can judge, 250 meters, or so. Moving from the north to the south in a straight line, it suddenly rushed upward with a great speed and disappeared in the night darkness.

Olexiy Oliynyk

*

In the same village of Boroven'ki I saw, one midnight of August of 1964, a cylinder-shaped object, three times larger than an airplane. It was flying from the south to the north, first parallel to the earth surface, at an altitude of about 1000 meters, and then it moved upward at an angle of 60 degrees. The object was yellow-colored. One could hear a humming sound and from its rear part there spurted long tongues of flame. The speed of the object was, in my opinion, equal to that of a jet aircraft.

Mykhaylo Oliynyk

*

The weather was clear and sunny. My friends and I went out for a stroll during a break between lessons. Suddenly I noticed a body looking like a light spot the color of aluminium, that was swiftly moving to the west. I called to my friends, but the body had already vanished. This happened in the first spring after the launch of the first Soviet artificial satellite [that is, in the spring of 1958, - *RB Editor*], at about 11 p.m.

A. Okladnyi, Glyns'k Village, Sumy Region

*

We noticed a "flying saucer" at 6.20 p.m., on September 22, 1966. It hovered motionless at a low altitude, being shaped like a flattened ball. For about ten minutes it was "standing" at the same place. Then it started moving and disappeared into the clouds at 6.35 p.m. There was a crowd in the yard, but nobody could explain this phenomenon. So, we decided to write to the journal.

A. Mishchenko, Zaporizhzhia

*

In August of last year [that is, 1965, - *RB Editor*] it was a wonderful starry night. I decided to make observations of meteors. First, I worked according to my plan, then just sat near the telescope for about an hour and studied the sky with the naked eye. Suddenly, in the constellation of Serpens, I saw some light-colored cone-shaped object. After two to three seconds it moved to the constellation of Aquarius. One could simultaneously hear a distinct sound resembling twittering of a flock of birds. This object flew over Chernigiv.

Vasyl' Klymenko

*

I heard about a similar phenomenon from my grandfather. This happened one evening in 1914. My grandfather was near a railroad and noticed in the sky several brilliant cigar-shaped objects that passed through the sky with a great speed from the north to the south. The same evening a jelly-like substance fell near the house of one peasant. It smelt unpleasant, and it was several hours before the substance dissolved.

Olexandr Polishchuk, Rachin Village, Rovno Region

*

Two years ago, in June, I was in the village of Viry, Bilopolye District, Sumy Region. One evening, at about 8-9 p.m., I saw in the sky a body of a peculiar shape. First, it seemed to be a globe. Later on, the body changed into a cylinder. But in this shape it remained for a short while only. Soon it took the shape of "trousers" starting to oscillate around the axis of rotation. Then suddenly the system took on a red color and vanished.

V. Soroka, Sumy

*

I too have observed a few extraordinary sky bodies. This happened in the Kharkiv Region. Two spheres of light-pink color, of different diameters, flew with a very great speed, being linked together. It was four to five years ago. Another time, I saw one ball only, also of pink color. In the middle of the ball there was a light hole. It was two to three years ago in the Lviv Region.

V. Garbarchuk

*

In August of 1958, at noon, I saw over the town of Chuguiv, Kharkiv Region, against the back-cloth of clouds, a moving ring, shaped like an automobile tire.

It moved from the east to the west. No traces remained.

A. Lutskevich

*

I and my friend Olexandr Vashchenko saw something similar in the autumn of 1959, being on Golosiivs'ka Square [in Kyiv]. At 9 p.m. we saw a fiery ball flying at a high altitude toward the Golosiivs'kiy forest, where it disappeared.

L. Krylov, Kyiv

*

It was on September 29, 1966, that I, Ivan Danilovich Skrypka, resident of Andriivka village, Ichnia District, Chernigiv Region, while working in a potato field, saw an interesting phenomenon.

It was a sunny autumn day. About 5.30 p.m. I saw in the southern part of the sky, at an angle of 45 to 50 degrees above the horizon, an exceptionally bright object. Its light resembled that of electric-arc welding. In this state, neither moving, nor changing its brightness, it remained for half an hour, or maybe longer.

Somewhat later, its light started to change. Every seven to eight minutes it would either dim or brighten. After an hour and a half, when the sun had set, one could see the object move to the south-east, darkening all the time. About 8 p.m. the object vanished.

I. Skrypka

*

It was three years ago, early in August, about 10 p.m., that I saw something similar to a UFO (unidentified flying object), but shaped like a candle with a fiery tail, not like a saucer. It was at the village of Sofiivka, Noviy Bug District, Mykolaiv Region. The object was flying at such an altitude, at which one can see a jet airplane with the naked eye. In its flight this "candle" covered for a minute, if not sooner, the whole part of the sky that could be seen from a steppe village.

As far as I remember, for a few seconds it was moving in a vertical position - just then I noticed it. After that it took up a horizontal position and a fiery tail appeared behind it.

G. Yaremenko

*

This happened in 1961 or 1962 (I do not remember the exact date) at about 11 p.m. I saw an ellipse-like body. It shone with a strange cold light, like the Moon. We thought it was a Soviet rocket, but perhaps it was a UFO, wasn't it?

Vasyl' Myroshnychenko, Manuylove Village, Donets'k Region

*

This happened in the summer of 1961. One day we were returning home after swimming, at 3 p.m. Suddenly my friend Myshko Parasun'ko exclaimed loudly:

- Look there, something is flying!

We looked upward and saw indeed a large fiery tail. We were unaware of what it was. The fiery luminary traversed the sky over our locality, moving from the east to the west. It flew at a low altitude, in a straight line. This space object was seen over the village of Ozaryntsi, Mogyliv-Podils'kiy District, Vinnytsia Region.

Olexandr Zyniak

*

In 1955, over the village of Gostroluchchia, where I then lived with my parents, late in evening there flew, low over the ground, a celestial body. It did not produce any sound, being of a dark-blue color, beginning from its head and ending with a light similar to that of electrical welding. The tail was bright-blue. In 1962, after we had moved to the village of Baryshivka, also in the evening, I observed strange flying sky objects. They were ten in number, of a round shape, different in size, and bright-yellow-colored. During their flight one distinctly heard a crackle and noise. These bodies were moving almost together, as if trying to outrun each other. Their speed was equal to that of a helicopter. Over three to four minutes, the bodies, gradually ascending, disappeared out of sight.

Mykola Matiukha

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

AURORA, TEXAS, 1897: BURIAL OF A MARTIAN?

Sir, –

In *RIAP Bulletin*, Vol. 7, No. 4, pp. 9–12 a letter was published by Chris Aubeck "Did a UFO Crash at Aurora, Texas?" It is interesting and informative, but I must disagree with the author's main thesis that the question of the reality of this event has not been settled as yet. In fact, it has, and the answer is definitely negative.

First of all, let us remember the general background of the supposed "UFO crash." In spring 1897 the whole United States was looking at the skies. Almost every day above this or that place there appeared mysterious "airships" with twinkling multicolored lights. Extremely powerful searchlights cut through the night darkness with their light beams, transforming night into day. Journalists were lost in conjectures, trying to guess who was behind this strange aerial machinery and putting forward various mad hypotheses. Most Americans believed that it was some "mysterious inventors" who had built these aeronautic devices at the back of beyond and were now testing them over the cities and villages of the United States. But there were rumors about Martians as well.

A certain Adam Oldham wrote in the *Clarksville Daily Leaf-Chronicle* that, in his opinion, it was Martians who were flying above the country. Traveling with the "speed of electricity," the inhabitants of the Red Planet are reconnoitering the country, making preparations for landing.

His letter was published on April 17, 1897. And it was on the same day that a Martian spaceship allegedly crashed in Aurora, Texas!

The sensation (see the full text of the original article by S. E. Haydon in Chris Aubeck's letter) went however unnoticed among the many newspaper hoaxes that multiplied in the press owing to the epidemic of "aeromania." Six days before the publication of Haydon's article, the *Illinois Sterling Evening Gazette* informed its readers that in the early morning of April 9, 1897, an "airship" crashed during a storm near the city of Lanark at the farm of a Johann Fliegeltoub. Only one member of the "airship" crew survived,

but after hysterical screams he lost consciousness. Fliegeltoub supposedly pulled the pilot dressed "after the fashion of the Greeks in the time of Christ" to his house and quickly promoted his discovery, taking a dollar from visitors for a look at the "airship." The correspondent of the *Gazette* "soothed his nerves with morphine and cocaine," after which he entered the room and questioned the pilot, who by that time had come to his senses. Speaking in Volapuek (an obsolete - at present - artificial language that at that time rivalled Esperanto), the pilot said that the crashed airship had arrived from Mars. Having recovered his health, the Martian repaired the airship, put on it the bodies of his dead companions and left the Earth. The reporter returned to the hotel, where he spent a night, smoking opium and eating hashish "to reach a necessary condition to write up this article."

This story hardly requires any comments...

In the *Saginaw Courier-Herald* dated April 17, 1897, there appeared an equally mad story about an "airship" that had landed near Reynolds, Michigan. Inside it there was a Martian more than three meters in height, "almost naked, who seemed to suffer from the heat." When a local farmer approached him, the malicious space visitor broke his leg. The same days, newspapers tested readers' credulity by one more tale - one about alien creatures having enormous gills and legs as sharp as nails that on their home planet are stuck into the ground. The eyes of the monsters from the "airship" resembled boiled eggs and they had pincers instead of hands. Other jokers and hoaxers had more than a dozen airships landing, their crews consisting, however, of normal earthlings, not of space visitors.

The information from Aurora also went practically unnoticed because the *Dallas Morning News*, where it appeared, tried the patience of its readers more than once with other fishy tales about "airships." In the issue of April 19, where was published the article by F. Haydon, there were another four "aeronautical" stories. This newspaper did no scruple to print obvious rubbish such as, for example, the story about the encounter of Judge Love and his friend, Mr. Beatty, from Waxahachie, Texas, with the descendants of the lost tribes of Israel that came in an airship from the Arctic region.

The captain of this airship allegedly said: "On the 1st day of January the Historical Society of North Pole Land decided to send out a number of airships throughout the United States and Europe. Twenty airships were <...> built <...> for the purpose, with a capacity of five men each. On the 1st day of March 1897 ten of these ships left for Europe and ten for America... By agreement the ten airships in the United States will meet in Nashville, Tenn., to attend the Centennial Exposition on June 18 and 19 and the ships will be on exhibition for those two days free of charge." [1]

Certainly, nobody can have seen any airships at the Centennial Exposition in Nashville, or at the Trans-Mississippi exhibition in Omaha, whither another "pilot" (this time an American, a certain C. A. Clinton) promised to drive his airship.

The fuss was brought to an end by the famous inventor Thomas Edison. When another hoax was connected with his name, he declared: "It is absolutely absurd to imagine that a man would construct a successful airship and keep the matter secret... When an airship is made it will not be in form of a balloon. It will be a mechanical contrivance, which will be raised by means of a very powerful motor of little weight. At present no one has discovered such a motor..." [2]

Edison's words did calm the nation down. The "airship" hysteria subsided and even those people who did see something unusual in the sky began to refrain from reporting it. The jokers also ceased their activity, having probably understood that the public had been satiated with the matter. Odd reports about airships continued to arrive from time to time up to August 1897, when, at last, everything stopped. The story about the crash of the Martian airship was forgotten for as long as seventy years.

However, it did not fall into complete oblivion. When ufologists rediscovered the half-forgotten "airship wave" of 1897 they hastened to dig up strange stories from the yellowed pages of old newspapers. Donald Hanlon, who first found the article by Haydon, was in total bewilderment. "After reading a report such as this, one has the impulse to either burst into gales of laughter or head for Texas with spade and shovel," - wrote he. [3]

The eminent astronomer and ufologist Dr. J. Allen Hynek phoned a friend of his who lived in Texas and asked him to go to the site and check everything.

In 1966, when Hynek's unnamed friend came to Aurora, it was not even a town. In this God-forsaken hole there lived less than three hundred people. But late in the 19th century it was the largest settlement of Wise county, with a population more than three thousand, and an important stop on the "Chisholm Trail" - the main route along which cowboys drove cattle to the Wild West. Everybody thought the city had a bright future, but... the reality proved to be different.

First, an epidemic of fever broke out, filling up the local cemetery. Many people decided not to wait for the same fate. Then the cotton plantations perished and those who lost their jobs also left the town. And then followed the worst stroke of fate: the railway went past Aurora, leaving it slowly to die.

In the 1960s there was only one gas-station in the town, owned by Brawley Oates. It was located exactly on the site of the former Judge Proctor's farm. But Oates himself knew nothing about the "crash" and therefore he advised Hynek's friend to visit an old resident of the locality named Oscar Lowry. It proved quite easy to find the latter. In 1897 Oscar Lowry was twelve years old. He told the ufologist that no crash has ever happened in the town or at least he does not remember anything of this sort.

In fact, the very content of Haydon's article testifies that its author has fabricated the whole story, from beginning to end. For example, T. J. Weems, said in the article to have been a "signals service officer" of the US Army, had actually been a blacksmith having nothing to do with the Army and even less with astronomy. No windmill ever existed on Judge Proctor's farm and therefore the "Martian airship" could not have collided with it.

Lowry added that he had already been visited by more than twenty people who wished to know something about the crash. One journalist even offered him some money to have him renounce his words and testify that fifty years ago the "Martian spaceship" did in fact crash in the town. But Oscar did not wish to act against his conscience in his old age and refused this proposition.

The cemetery where the "airship pilot" was supposedly buried was then owned by the Freemasons. The Masons have kept very thorough notes about burials; naturally enough, no note about the "burial of the Martian" could be found among these. Having walked between the graves, Hynek's friend did not detect any unidentified tombstone.

Another researcher who visited Aurora and talked with Oscar Lowry was Dr. Alfred E. Kraus from the Kilgore Research Institute. He used in his search a metal detector, but could not find anything essential, apart from rusty nails, parts of old harness, etc. Not a piece of the "unknown metal" that had supposedly covered several acres of ground after the crash was discovered.

Frank Tolbert, a commentator of the *Dallas Morning News* (the same newspaper in which Haydon's article had appeared) linked in his item, published on January 4, 1967, the "crash" with the notorious "railroad telegrapher hoax." In the 1950s–1960s there still lived those people who not only remembered well about the events of the year 1897, but even participated actively in stirring up the "aeronautical hysteria." Aged telegraph operators said that the "joke" had been invented by their colleagues from Iowa: they made up the story about the "airship" and transmitted it by telegraph line. Soon, dozens of railroad telegraph operators joined in the hoax, reading not without pleasure the newspaper headlines about the "airship." Tolbert came to the conclusion that, most probably, the UFO crash at Aurora had never happened. He did not venture to add that in those years journalistic ethics were virtually nonexistent and the mad stories about "airships" were invented by newspaper reporters, including those of the *Dallas Morning News*, even without the help of any telegraph conspirators. As far back as 1947, the journalist Bill Edwards, who had worked fifty years before at the *Dallas Morning News*, confessed that due to the lack of real news he had had to fabricate the "aerial" stories. [4]

By the early 1970s almost all UFO researchers arrived at the conclusion that Haydon's article was just one of many jokes that had appeared at the time of the "aeronautical hysteria." There were, however, some dissidents as well.

In 1973 Bill Case, a commentator of the Texan newspaper *Dallas Times Herald* started his own investigation of the Aurora event. There immediately appeared sensational news.

First, Brawley Oates changed his story! Now he stated that he had known about the UFO crash "all of his life." [5] In 1945, when Oates helped to repair an old well "beneath Judge Proctor's windmill," a "large number of metal fragments" were allegedly taken out of it. There appeared other aged inhabitants of Aurora who also seemed to confirm the story about the "crash."

Case cited 92-year-old Mary Evans whose words are also quoted by Chris Aubeck:

"I was only fifteen at the time and had all but forgotten the incident until it appeared in the papers recently. We were living in Aurora at the time, but my mother and father wouldn't let me go with them when they went up to the crash site at Judge Proctor's well. When they returned home they told me how the airship had exploded. The pilot was torn up and killed in the crash. The men of the town who gathered his remain said he was a 'small man' and buried him that same day in Aurora cemetery. That crash certainly caused a lot of excitement. Many people were frightened. They didn't know what to expect. That was years before we had any regular airplanes or other kinds of airships."

Any psychologist could explain that such testimonies should be attributed to the "false memories" syndrome. If someone is persistently trying to recall something, or is repeatedly asked to recall it, it will necessarily happen sooner or later. But in this case the hypothesis of "false memories" is scarcely needed: rather, we are dealing with a forgery authored by a 'fanciful' investigator. Miss Evans told ufologist Hayden Hewes, founder of the International UFO Bureau, that Case "wrote that up to suit himself" and in fact she "didn't say it this way."

Bill Case and his colleague from the *Fort Worth Star-Telegram* Jim Marrs cited 83-year-old Charles C. Stephens who had supposedly seen, together with his father, the "airship" fly towards Aurora, heard the explosion, and also seen the fire over the town. In the morning his father paid a visit to the town, where he saw a mass of torn metal and burned detritus.

Sounds good, but... when Hayden Hewes and representatives of APRO contacted Stephens personally, he replied: "I never said that my father had actually seen the airship, and all I had seen personally in 1897 was a fire in Aurora. I thought it was a house that was burning."

One more "eyewitness," whose testimonies were quoted by Case, was studying somewhere in Oklahoma in 1897 and in fact knew nothing about the "crash."

Other aged inhabitants of Aurora also disappointed proponents of factuality of the Martian crash story. Thus, Etta Pegues, an 86-year-old journalist, writer, and active member of the local Historical Society said: "It was all a hoax cooked up by Hayden and a bunch of men sitting around in the general store. Hayden was a well-known joker."[6] Etta confirmed that Judge Proctor had never owned a windmill.

If Bill Case had confined himself to retelling and distorting the testimonies of local inhabitants of Aurora, his articles would hardly have generated such a fuss. However, Case stated that he actually had in his hands the debris of the "airship"!

It was a "scientific treasure hunter" from Corpus Christi named Frank Kelley who brought to Bill Case pieces of some metal, saying that he had found them in "this region," that is not far from the former Proctor's farm. This metal was sent to several scientific laboratories for analysis. Physicist Tom Gray from the University of North Texas stated that at least one piece was "unusual."[7] Three fragments that he examined proved to be, according to his words, a metal typical for this locality, but the fourth one was different. The piece looked as if somebody had poured the molten metal out onto the ground. It consisted of iron (75%) and zinc (25%), with small admixtures of other elements, but did not display any magnetic properties.

When Canadian specialists got this piece, they did not find in it any "unusual composition or structural characteristics."[8] The *APRO Bulletin* draw their readers' attention to the fact that the fragment was in a sufficiently good state; but if an iron-zinc alloy had spent all of the 75 years under the ground, it would hardly have been so well preserved.[9] Most probably, as these researchers supposed, this piece got into the ground much later, having nothing to do with the "crash" of 1897.

Still one fragment discovered by Case and his assistants proved to consist of aluminium (83%) and zinc (16%), with possible traces of manganese and copper. It might have been any of a number of normal aluminium alloys, but, as was stated by specialists from the McDonnell-Douglas corporation, nothing of this sort had been produced before 1908. The question, however, remains: who can guarantee that the piece has any connection with the events of the year 1897, and was not brought to the site much later?

Please also note that none of the "debris of the Martian airship" corresponds to the description given by Haydon - the latter wrote that the airship was built from a metal "resembling somewhat a mixture of aluminium and silver." This certifies once again that the collected debris had nothing to do with the "crash."

However, all this is outshone by Case's "main discovery": he stated that he had found at the back part of the cemetery the "grave of the Martian"! The suspicious grave was small, as if meant for a dwarf or a child. At the head of the burial there stood a roughly worked stone with an equally rough picture resembling a "<" shape with two or three small circles inside. One would need an extremely vivid imagination to see in it the "edge of a disk-like UFO," a "comet," or a "cigar-shaped spaceship with windows." Skeptics believed it was not a picture at all, but accidental scratches made by a plough or a pick-axe.

Having walked over the grave with a metal detector, Bill Case found in it "at least three large pieces of metal." It only remained to open the grave and to find out, who (or what) lay in it. The fuss around the cemetery then reached its culmination. Frank Tolbert said that in those days he had "heard more talk about Aurora than I did about Watergate." [11]

The Aurora Cemetery Association that owned the cemetery after the Masons refused to give permission for the exhumation.[12] Then at night somebody edged his way to the small grave and dug it up.

In the morning of June 14, 1973, the cemetery watchmen discovered that the tombstone had been stolen. Some unknown desecrators of the dead had thrust thin probes into the grave and extracted from it all the metal; at least, the metal detector no longer registered anything inside the grave. Ufologists supposed that the probes could be used for stealing not only the metal but also tissue samples from the corpse, parts of its dress, as well as everything that could help to identify the buried person. All agreed that the stealing was "organized professionally."

At present it would be useless to guess who robbed the grave and what for. A year before his death, Bill Case said that he believed they had

been government agents. But why didn't the government agents simply dig up the body, taking it together with the dress and metal? If they intended to conceal the fact that it was a "Martian" who lay in the grave, why did they leave his bones, which would make it possible (at least, in principle) to find out whether or not it was an extraterrestrial being that lay there?

Even if one day in the future the Aurora Cemetery Association gives permission for the exhumation of the dead person, it will hardly put an end to the controversy. Let us suppose that there lies a child, one of the victims of the epidemics of 1891, when hundreds of bodies had been buried there and one grave could have been missed in the cemetery books. What then? The hot proponents of the "space visitors" will hardly admit defeat. They will immediately say that it is a wrong grave and the "pilot" could have been buried elsewhere. And nobody will ever give permission to uncover all 800+ graves of the cemetery.

In any case, a crash of a "Martian airship" in the middle of the town would have left much more real traces - such as police reports, debris picked up by local inhabitants, cemetery notes and records in the town archives, photographs, documents of the Historical Society, old diaries and letters, and, last but not least, some sequels to Haydon's publication in the newspapers. Nothing of this sort has ever been found in Aurora. The whole story is therefore pure fabrication, and nothing more.

– Mikhail Gershtein, St.Petersburg, Russia

Notes and References

[1] Quoted from: Cohen D. *The Great Airship Mystery.* N.Y.: Dodd, Mead and Co., 1983, p. 106.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 87.

[3] Hanlon D. B. Texas Odyssey of 1897. - *Flying Saucer Review,* 1966, Vol. 12, No. 5 (Sept.-Oct.)

[4] See: Valley Man's Imagination Hoaxed State 50 Years Ago. - *McAllen Valley Evening Monitor,* 1947, July 9.

[5] See: Cohen D. *Op. cit.*, p. 114.

[6] *Ibid.*, p. 117

[7] Marrs J. *Alien Agenda.* N.Y.: Harper, 1998, p. xxxiv.

[8] *Ibid.*, p. xxxiv.

[9] See: The Aurora, Texas, Case. *A.P.R.O. Bulletin* (May/June 1973): 1,3-4.

[10] Marrs J. *Op. cit.*, p. xxix.

[11] Cohen D. *Op. cit.*, p. 116.

[12] See: *Ibid.*

A PARADIGM FOR UFOs AMPLIFYING DISCUSSIONS

Sir, –

To anyone who bothers to look into the matter sufficiently, and does so with an open mind, the question of whether UFOs are real has an obvious answer. They are, without doubt, real. There are simply too many consistently-similar and reliable eyewitness reports to believe that all of those people are mistaken or making things up. But, if UFOs are real, what are they?

I have applied approximately equal doses of logic (common sense) and technical experience to that question, and have reached the following conclusion. UFOs must be manifestations of atmospheric electrical processes. Further, they must involve processes that do not fall within the accepted paradigm for atmospheric electrical behavior.

It is probably appropriate to make the point here that there are many other atmospheric phenomena that apparently do not fall within the accepted paradigm, phenomena acknowledged to exist, but for which proper understanding continues to elude scientists investigating them. Among these are the upward flash phenomena above thunderclouds (Red Sprites, Blue Jets, Elves, etc.), positive polarity cloud-to-ground lightning, ball lightning, and several observed properties of meteors. The fact that scientists seem to be making no headway in describing what is going on in these phenomena indicates to me that their paradigm lacks some important basics. Since they have grappled with the enigma of positive lightning for more than fifty years, it seems strange that atmospheric scientists themselves haven't been driven to that same conclusion by that one issue alone.

Why do I contend that UFOs are electrical manifestations? There are numerous reasons, but I will cite the two most basic. First is the non-material aspect of their behavior. For a light or other observed form to zip across the sky at what must be supersonic speed and yet produce no sound, there seems no other explanation than that there is no "body" associated with the light or form. In addition to generally not producing a sonic boom, UFOs are also observed to make physically-impossible changes of direction, and to suddenly disappear and then almost instantaneously reappear at a new location. It is impossible to imagine how solid bodies could be made to do these things, but in an electrical explanation, none of these behaviors presents a

problem. Of course, one can always claim that alien spacecraft are capable of doing these things, using physics we are too primitive to understand. For this researcher, that train of thought leads to nowhere.

The second reason is the multitude of forms that UFOs take on. To explain such multiplicity, one could conjure up a whole variety of different processes or "entities." But does it not seem more logical to think that no more than a few unknown processes are likely involved? A convincing (to me) aspect of the electrical hypothesis is that it is capable of providing explanation for virtually every form and behavior that UFOs have been repeatedly observed to exhibit. Later paragraphs will touch on some of those aspects.

As Vladimir Rubtsov points out in his essay, "Trying to Learn the Lessons of History" (*RIAP Bulletin*, 2001, Vol. 7, No. 4) what ufology lacks, and badly needs, is its own "paradigm." In the paragraphs that follow, I try to define just such a paradigm. My definition may not be the right one, but I urge all those who take the time to read it to carefully consider its implications. It does, after all, constitute a paradigm, a framework within which the whole gamut of UFOs can possibly find explanation. Although I personally believe it to be close to "the truth," I also am enough of a realist to understand how difficult it will be for others to agree. Perhaps its greatest value will lie in the discussions and arguments that it may spawn. If nothing else, it should provide some degree of focus for such discussions.

Basic to this UFO paradigm is a new concept, a heretofore-unrecognized mechanism by which electric charges and energy can move through the atmosphere. It is my contention that under the right conditions, ions can form themselves into a "channel," and that charges can move within that channel without incurring the losses generally considered inevitable due to collisions with air molecules. And, because there is very little loss along the channel, it remains invisible for most of its length. To me, the logical answer to the question of how a stationary "light in the sky" or a lightning ball gets its energy is simple - energy is being supplied via one of these channels.

How does such a channel arise? I have imagined a model invoking bilateral ion flow within the channel, that is, positive ions moving in one direction and negative ions in the other. This artifice was necessary to keep the channel essentially electrically-neutral. Otherwise, mutual repulsion between ions would cause the channel to expand and consequently, to deteriorate. A necessary condition for such a channel, then, is a source of ions at each terminus. For most UFO situations, I contend one terminus is likely the ionosphere, and the other is the earth or some object at the earth. For ball lightning, most probably a thundercloud serves as the upper terminus. It is conceivable that some or all of the negative ions might, in fact, be electrons. But, this is a minor point. The important idea is that the channel is essentially electrically neutral, that is, populated by nearly equal densities of positive and negative charges. By negating the repulsive forces between like charges, the channel can then remain dense enough, both from a mass and an energy point of view, to fend off the incursions of surrounding air molecules.

There is another quite important consideration about such a channel. Since ion sources are assumed to exist at each end, no breakdown of air is needed to create the charge carriers. That in turn implies strong electrical fields are unnecessary. With the channel also assumed to have low losses, the whole process can be a "low voltage" mechanism. There are many indications that strong electric fields, the kind present in thunderstorms, are not involved in UFO events and other luminous enigmas. Absence of strong electric fields, along with electrical neutrality of the channel, may be the principal reasons science has not stumbled across the mechanism.

At this point in the discussion I probably should digress a bit about ions. Many scientists have difficulty with the idea of ions traveling the length of an extended channel. They contend that if nothing else, ion recombination lifetimes would not permit it. My response to that is that there is no such thing as an ion lifetime, that is, something intrinsic to the ion. Rather, the tendency to "recombine" is a function of the environment the ion finds itself in. Change that environment and all bets are off. If an ion finds itself out in space, for example, far from a recombination partner, or alternately, totally in the presence of like ions or neutral molecules, what is it to recombine with?

Allow me to make a further digression to the Moon, because it can be of help in envisioning self-formation of the hypothesized channels. For centuries, observers have recorded mysterious local brightenings on the Moon (often referred to as transient lunar phenomena, or TLPs). Many of these appear to be bright points of light, i.e., very localized, and more than that, to recur in certain regions of the Moon time and time again, for example, in the crater Aristarchus. The solar wind has been ruled out as a possible source of such luminosities on grounds of insufficient energy density. But what if there were some means by which solar wind particles could be concentrated, or focused, onto a given spot? Then it would simply be a question of how large a volume of the solar wind could be redirected toward the focal point. In that regard, consider

the following scenario. Suppose that in transiting Earth's magnetic field en route to the Moon, solar wind ions become differentiated into polarized flows, positive ions having been diverted in one direction and negative ions in the other. Ions arriving at some region of the Moon's surface can then be predominately of one polarity. If those ions, when impacting the Moon, ionize and dissociate the material there, then the Moon can become a channel terminus. The ions knocked off will naturally be of opposite polarity to the impactors, and will be drawn upward by the electric field carried by the impactors. Moreover, if there is a localized spot that is especially efficient in producing knock-off ions, it will become a focus, or attachment point, of the channel, via the following reasoning. Wherever a concentration of knock-off ions exists, the field carried by the incoming flow will be reduced (partially negated) to a greater degree than for surrounding areas. This will cause incoming ions to be drawn inward toward the concentration spot. The resulting increase in numbers of ions impacting there will in turn create more knock-off ions, thus reinforcing the whole mechanism. The overall effect is to change the local solar wind ion flow from a diffuse flow into a concentrated strand terminating at the attachment spot. Since the knock-off ions will travel against the incoming flow, one can envision the concentration (strand-forming) process beginning at considerable distance upstream.

I contend that such an energy concentration mechanism provides a rational explanation for TLPs. Perhaps it serves even better to explain another well-documented lunar dilemma, namely, localized glassifications of lunar soil. Such formations were first noted and photographed by Apollo 11 astronauts, and possible origins for them considered by Thomas Gold (*Science*, 165, 1345; 1969). Even more enigmatic than the numerous glassifications themselves was the fact that each coated the top surface of a small clump of fragile lunar soil which was in turn situated near the center of a small crater (20 cm to 1.5 m in diameter). Gold suggested that flash heating from a powerful solar event was the most probable cause, but his theory was criticized, mainly for not possessing the concentration mechanism necessary to focus heating onto a small area. I submit that the strand-forming property described above fits beautifully into an explanation for both the craters and the glassifications. Melting of the surface of the lunar soil clump by a concentrated "ion beam" can explain how the clump somehow remained otherwise intact. Two possible mechanisms for forming the crater come to mind. If in addition to melting, some of the lunar material was vaporized, expansion of the resulting gases could have blown aside the loose lunar soil, leaving a small crater. A second possibility is that impinging ions implanted enough electric charge on the surrounding soil grains for mutual repulsion to cause the grains to fly away from each other, leaving a crater.

My purpose in dwelling on these lunar phenomena is twofold. First, they represent scientifically documented enigmas, whereas in most scientists' minds, UFOs do not. Secondly, the hypothetical mechanism that can explain how these lunar phenomena might occur is the same one I propose to be at work within the atmosphere in UFO events. In both lunar phenomena, what has enabled them to defy explanation in the past has been lack of a reasonable energy-focusing mechanism. A strand-forming characteristic in ion flows that impinge upon the surface of a body can serve to provide such a mechanism. Granted, it is only an imagined characteristic at this point, but its existence would certainly fit well with the observed evidence. Indeed, the observations cry out for a concentrating mechanism of some sort, and a concentration mechanism that utilizes electrical forces, as opposed to optical or electromagnetic focusing, seems a lot more plausible. And, it allows something already acknowledged to be in the vicinity, i.e., the solar wind, to be the "unknown" energy source.

Back to the UFO paradigm. So far, an ion-based mechanism for transferring charge and energy within the atmosphere has been invoked to explain how lights and glows can form in the sky and even zip around at unreal speeds. What about other types of UFOs, such as opaque objects with well-defined shapes, or those exhibiting metallic surfaces? Can those result from the same mechanism? My response to that is an emphatic yes. In fact, unless one chooses to accept alien spacecraft as their explanation, an electrically-based origin is virtually the only one that can be imagined. Here is what I believe to be occurring in such apparitions.

With the concept of bilateral flow (and electrical neutrality) within an ion channel comes a realization that very high ion densities can, in principle, result. One might call such formations "ultra-dense plasmas." Perhaps a conventional electric arc is such a plasma. However, its temperature is so high that its light output overwhelms any that may result from reflection or scattering of incident light. I contend that a plasma that is both dense enough and cool enough can exhibit a range of optical properties that we normally associate with solid materials. For example, if the density of a plasma became great enough that electrons could move from ion to ion much as they move from atom to atom in a metal crystal, then the surface of that plasma

could, like a metal, reflect light. Similarly, cold plasmas of other densities and constituency might be highly refractive or absorptive. In short, it seems probable that all of the various visual manifestations of UFOs are produced electrically. Then, when the electrical energy and forces that hold the channel (and visible "structure") together are removed, the apparition simply vanishes, becoming just so many more gaseous molecules in that part of the atmosphere.

There is much more that could be related in fleshing out the UFO paradigm, but I will touch on only a couple of points. When considering electric charge (and energy) moving about via the medium of ions, it should always be considered that those ions represent material. Whereas an electron current can move charge and energy from one place to another without altering the host material, the same cannot be said for an ion current. Ions are "material." Consequently, when a UFO event occurs, and making the assumption that an "ion channel" was behind it, one might look for alterations of material at the ground terminus of the channel.

It happens that a very dramatic form of such alteration has been repeatedly observed. In the U.S., incidents called "cattle mutilations" happen many times each year, particularly in the western states. Without doubt, similar events occur elsewhere in the world, but for many reasons are probably attributed to other causes. However, Argentina is currently undergoing a siege of such events, and the characteristics being reported are unmistakably the same. In a "mutilation," an animal's carcass is found with very mystifying wounds. Generally, most of the animal's exposed "soft tissue" has been "attacked." Organs such as eyes, ears, lips, nose, tongue, rectum, vagina, uterus, penis, scrotum appear to have been surgically removed with instruments far sharper than those possessed by medical science, and are nowhere to be found. In addition, all of this has been accomplished without significant bleeding. The carcass is virtually devoid of blood. To investigators examining such incidents, there seems virtually no way to explain such feats. They seem beyond the capabilities of anything they are aware of.

But, it happens that there is a known mechanism that does similar astonishing things - cut unbelievably precise and deep holes, and make material "disappear" in the process. The process is called dry etching, or ion-etching, and it is used to carve tiny machine parts out of silicon wafers. In ion etching, the masked wafer is placed in a vacuum chamber into which a small amount of ionizable gas is introduced. A strong RF field is then set up in the chamber so as to ionize the gas. The RF field is also oriented such as to cause the ions to oscillate vertically above the wafer. Where the ions strike the unmasked wafer material, they ionize and dissociate it, turning it into a gas which is drawn off by the vacuum pump. The result is extremely precise etching, with no undercutting, perfectly vertical walls, and with no detritus.

I am convinced that nature is doing the same thing with the cattle tissue, i.e., etching it away with ions. And most probably, the ions come from the ionosphere, and they come via ion channels such as I have hypothesized. The tissue is ionized (vaporized), and drawn up the channel toward the ionosphere, never to be seen again in its original form. If anyone believes this explanation is far too fantastic to be true, I challenge them to delve into mutilation incidents and after studying them, to come up with a less fantastic explanation.

The reason the animal's "soft tissue" is attacked is that it contains body fluids very near the surface, and those fluids (including blood) are more easily ionized than the dry hide and hair "masking" other parts of the animal. The connection will naturally concentrate on areas where production of knock-off ions is greatest, and that happens to be the soft tissue. The end result is a "bizarre mutilation." To this researcher, though, the incidents are no longer bizarre, but instead reveal the nature of the processes involved. The incidents, because of their otherwise inexplicable nature, constitute compelling evidence for existence of an ion-conduction mechanism such as I have outlined. How else can such incidents be explained?

The above paragraphs probably seem a bit incoherent or disjointed. But, try to treat them as I hope you will, as arguing points concerning a new paradigm; one that addresses itself to the entire field of atmospheric enigmas, of which UFOs are perhaps only the most contentious part.

Richard E. Spalding

Albuquerque, New Mexico

UFO OBSERVATION IN SLOVAKIA

Sir, –

Here is a short report on a UFO event in Slovakia. April 29, 2001: During my second expedition to the Slovakia/Urkraine area researching the "Moon Shaft" I arrived in Slovakia by way of Prague to Bratislava and passed within 20 km of Levice on May 2, 2001. I arrived in Poprad to find my "Slovakian family" (good friends since my 1999 trip to the area on the first Moon Shaft expedition) very excited. They told me that they had seen a video of a UFO on Slovakian National television just two evenings before my arrival. A large object was seen approaching the new nuclear power plant near Levice on the evening of April 29, 2001. The object was quite bright and multi-colored and moved slowly over the old plant stacks lowering in altitude as it passed over the central complex of buildings between the old and new stacks. It just missed one of the taller two stacks rising from the buildings. It proceeded to the new plant stacks and hovered for ten minutes before ascending vertically at very high speed. The object set off the video security cameras throughout the plant complex. So it was photographed from many angles. Slovakian television showed a short clip from one of the cameras one time on the news. I immediately returned to Levice and talked with many local people trying to get more information. They did admit that the object was seen and photographed but would not discuss their personal observations. They suggested contacting the central authority for information and took me to meet with him. He would not provide any details but did tell me I should go to the people who knew all about the event. He gave me detailed instructions to the location of these people which he called the astronomers. I drove directly to the location finding only a large cemetary!

I decided it was useless to pursue the matter under these circumstances! I then drove to the nuclear plant and photographed the site with 35mm stills and digital video. I contacted the director of Slovakian National television and asked to see the video. He replied that he would check to see if that would be possible. He returned my call and said that they would not be showing the video again and no copies would be available.

I hope this is of some interest to you, nothing was carried about this in the United States to my knowledge.

Ted Phillips,
Center for Physical Trace Research

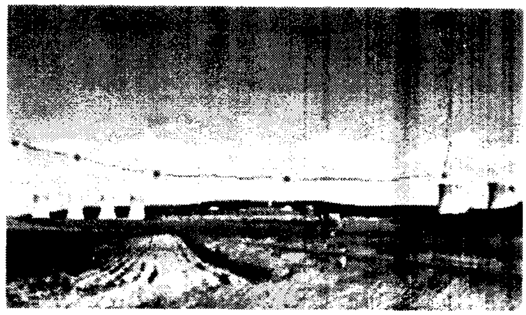


Fig. 1. The plant with the object path drawn in

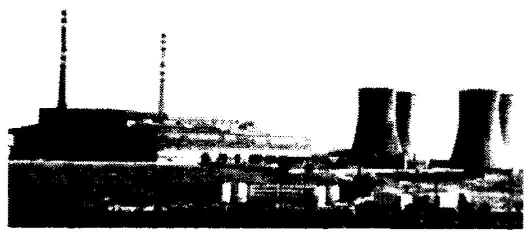


Fig. 2. The central building complex and the two tall stacks just missed by the descending object

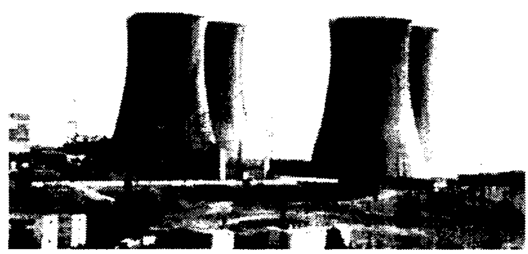


Fig. 3. The new plant stacks where the object hovered only 20 feet above their tops.

EDITOR: Vladimir V. Rubtsov
RIAP
P.O.Box 4542
61022 Kharkov-22
UKRAINE

E-mail: tolimak@iatp.org.ua